

Statement by Norway on stockpile destruction (agenda item 9 e) delivered during the 17th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine-Ban Convention, Geneva, 26-30 November 2018.

30 November 2018.

Thank you, Madam President.

Stockpile destruction is a tangible success of the Mine Ban Convention. More than 51 million stockpiled landmines have been destroyed by States Parties to the Convention. This number represents very real protection achievements, since none of these destroyed mines will ever harm a child, a man or a woman.

We warmly congratulate Oman on having completed stockpile destruction well within the deadline set by the Convention.

The remaining challenges in the area of stockpile destruction are country-specific and require country-specific follow-up. We commend the efforts of the President in this regard.

The two States Parties that have not completed stockpile destruction within their deadlines and therefore are in non-compliance with their obligations face very different circumstances. We encourage both Greece and Ukraine to continue to be guided by the Maputo Action Plan, to do their utmost to move forward as quickly as possible, and to keep the States Parties updated.

Madam President,

Norway intends to build upon your efforts and continue to have an active and open dialogue with the States Parties concerned throughout our presidency.

Finally Madam President,

Allow me in this context to raise another, but related issue.

Norway is concerned about the considerable number of mines retained for training purposes under the exception clause in Article 3 of the Convention. The numbers retained appear for some States Parties to be unreasonably high, and we question why these numbers in some cases remain the same year after year.

It seems difficult to escape the conclusion that at least some of these mines may not be retained for the purposes allowed under Article 3. We believe it would be important, in this respect, to remind ourselves that every mine destroyed is potentially a life or a limb saved.

We have noted with interest the technological development that would allow for live mines retained for training purposes to be substituted by replica, simulant or surrogate mines.

In light of this, we would like to foster a conversation within the mine ban community on the need to retain mines under the exception to the prohibition against stockpiling, contained in Article 3.

Thank you.